

Applicant : Anatoli Verentchikov et al.
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REMARKS

By this Amendment, Applicants have amended claims 1, 6, 9, 17, 20, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 30, 35, 39, 47, 49, and 61; canceled claim 62; and have added new claim 79. Accordingly, claims 1-61 and 79 remain pending.

In the Office Action, the Examiner makes a four-way restriction requirement whereby he has elected the four independent claims (claims 1, 33, 48, and 61) into four separate groups. Applicants hereby elect Group I, which includes independent claim 1 and claims 2-32, which depend from claim 1. Applicants make this election with traverse.

Applicants respectfully traverse the restriction requirement, particularly insofar as dependent claims 49 and 62, which depend from claims 48 and 61 of Groups III and IV, recite the features of independent claim 1, which constitutes Group I. In any event, Applicants have now amended claim 61 to incorporate the features of claim 62 such that both independent claims 1 and 61 recite at least the features of claim 1.

With respect to the restriction requirement between Groups II and III, Applicants submit that these claims are sufficiently similar and that they should be grouped together. The Examiner has not provided any basis for restricting Groups II and III from one another within the Office Action. The Examiner's sole basis appears to be some statement that the claimed features do not distinguish over the prior art. However, this is not a basis for restriction, but rather a basis for prior art rejection if indeed the features are not patentable over the prior art.

Applicants have also added new claim 79, which depends from claim 33. New claim 79 recites the features of independent claim 1. Applicants submit that with the election of claims 1-32, at least claims 49, 61, and 79 should also be examined in this application.

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Applicants submit that the pending claims are patentable and therefore request the issuance of a Notice of Allowance.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date

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